

Appl. No. 09/745,488
Amdt. Dated: May 21, 2004
Reply to Office Action of: 11/23/2003

REMARKS

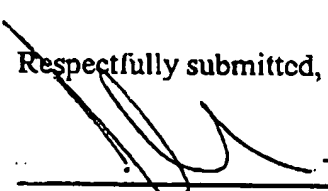
In response to the Office Action dated November 21, 2003, the Applicants have amended claim 1 to further distinguish over the art of record. The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) on the basis of the U.S. patent 6,212,636 to Boyle.

Claim 1 has been amended to reference the provision in the message of having a portion signed by a sender and including the identity of the intended recipient. Such an arrangement cannot be found in the Boyle reference and accordingly claims 1 and 2 are believed to clearly distinguish over that reference.

The Examiner has rejected claims 3 through 7 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) taking official notice of common techniques in the art. However, in view of the fact that Boyle does not teach the provision of the signed portion as noted above, it is believed there is nothing in the art to suggest the subject matter claimed by claims 3 through 7 and accordingly, it is believed that the objection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is traverse.

Further action to allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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